

February 2002

Rumours from Paddington

Daryl Rayner
xrefer, daryl@xrefer.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Rayner, Daryl (2002) "Rumours from Paddington," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 14: Iss. 1, Article 38.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3162>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Pricing Issues has ceased publication with issue number 257 on August 12, 2001. I am reproducing her letter here as it contains not only reminiscences of times past, but a discussion of the future. Says Marcia, "From its beginning on February 27, 1989 (as an **ALA Resources and Technical Services Division** publication) through the final issue, the pricing newsletter has been a delight for me, the most fun I ever had as a librarian. But times have changed. The newsletter was one of the earliest — if not the earliest — library-related electronic publications. In 1989, **BITNET**, **Datalinx** and **ALANET** were state-of-the-art systems, and the pricing newsletter published through them all. The World Wide Web made our job much easier and enabled us to provide an archive of all the issues. Four and a half years ago I retired as a serials librarian, and three years ago I taught my last serials librarianship course. That's a long time to be away from the day-to-day serials world. **Jim Mouw** has been wonderful as a permanent 'guest editor,' but he is a very busy man, and the pricing newsletter is very much my baby. No one else can be expected to be as emotionally involved as I have been! Jim, the editorial board, and I have contemplated the advisability of trying to continue the newsletter, even of selling it to a commercial publisher. However, it seems that the best course of action is to cease publication. As technology matured, so did the means of distributing news about serial pricing; we were not the only game in town. Also, the pricing issue itself evolved from simply concern about subscription rates to include other matters such as licensing of online journals. As people's interests moved from issues related directly to pricing, new forums developed to address those issues. Many of these new forums employ listserv technology, allowing for immediate posting and feedback. We considered moving the newsletter to this technology, but it became apparent that adequate channels already existed, and we decided not to reinvent the wheel. The time for a periodic newsletter addressing issues of immediate concern has passed. My sincere thanks to all the editorial board members: **Deana Astle**, **Mary Beth Clack**, **Jerry Curtis**, **Chuck Hamaker**, and **Bob Houbeck** — the original members; and **Keith**

continued on page 14

Rumours from Paddington

by **Daryl Rayner** (Marketing Director, xrefer; Phone: +44 (0) 20 7479 9204; Fax: +44 (0) 20 7479 9212) <daryl@xrefer.com> www.xrefer.com
www.xreferplus.com

The Online Information conference and exhibition took place at the beginning of December in Olympia, London. It was the event's Silver Jubilee. Strange to think that the first event took place before the Internet was a household word and before the PC revolutionised desktop access to computing. **Learned Information** did a great job organising a lively and interesting few days. The product presentations, running concurrently to the exhibition were jam-packed. Speakers included **Jenny Walker** from **Ex-Libris**, **Amanda Spiteri** from **ScienceDirect**, **Simon Jennings** from the **Resource Network Centre**, **Kings College**, **Tim Owen** from the **Library Association** and **Tim Ingoldsby** from the **American Institute of Physics**. **Gary Price** (ex George Washington Library) and **Greg Notess** (Montana State University) the tireless pair of librarians-come-Web-search-Gurus were both involved in the information master classes and keynote seminars.

BioMedCentral, the publishing company committed to a policy of free access to scientific research has announced that it will introduce a processing charge for articles published in its online journals starting January 1st 2002. I guess it is hard to sustain a completely free model ad infinitum.

BioMedCentral has also announced that it will be collaborating with *The Scientist* to produce "the most widely distributed life science magazine in the world." The serial-entrepreneur, **Vitek Tracz** Chairman of the **Current Science Group**, the company behind **BioMedCentral**, is said to be delighted about the prospects of this partnership.

The **JISC**-funded six month project **INSPIRAL** is now finished and a full report available at <http://inspiral.cdlr.strath.ac.uk>. The project's remit was to identify and critically analyse the issues that surround linking virtual learning environments (VLE's) and digital libraries. The focus was on the institutional and end-user perspectives. The dynamic **Sarah Currier** **INSPIRAL** research Fellow at the **University of Strathclyde** and her Research assistant, **Sharron Brown**, worked non-stop for the past six months holding focus groups, conducting online research and generally wading through the issues this new and exciting area has brought to the surface. Their analysis is to provide **JISC** (the **Joint Information Services Committee**) with priority areas for strategic planning and investment.

London has been gripped by "*The Lord of the Rings*" mania (the film was released on Dec 19th) following the recent "*Harry Potter*" hysteria. **The British Library** satisfied appetites for anything related to the famous books by run-

ning a Tolkien exhibition until the end of January. The exhibition displayed a trove of Rings memorabilia including the first illustrated edition of J.R.R Tolkien's "*The Lord of the Rings*" trilogy and rare first edition copies of "*The Hobbit*" as well as letters and notes from the author to his grandson.

The British Library have also announced that they have completed stage one of their project to put online the 1.5 million **Union Catalogue of Books records**, listing stock held by the **British Library's Document Supply Centre**. This means that the DSC's pre 1950 records, 450,000 in total, are now available on the **British Library Public Catalogue** and can be searched via the Library's Website.

The host for the 2002 **UKAIS** conference is the **School of Information Management, Leeds Metropolitan University**. This conference is the premiere event in the Information Systems calendar within the UK and attracts leading academics and researchers from the UK and overseas. There is a call for papers via the Website <http://www.lmu.ac.uk/ies/ukais/callpapers.htm>.

Chris Martindale, Subject Advisor **Derbyshire Business School** and **UC&R Committee** member organised a stimulating afternoon discussing **eBooks and their future** at the **University of Derbyshire** at the end of November. Speakers included **Louise Edwards** Head of Management Information Resource Centre, **Cranfield School of Management** and member of **JISC eBooks Working Group** and **Penny Garrod**, **Public Library Networking Focus UKOLN - UK Office for Library and Information Networking**.

The Library Association in London also held a seminar on eBooks and publishing recently attended by 50 librarians from throughout the UK keen to learn about the latest developments. **Louise Edwards** from **JISC** was speaking again (she must be exhausted!) as was **Suzanne Wilson-Higgins**, Commercial Director, **Lightning Source Ltd**, **Christine-Love Rodgers** Assistant Librarian Learner Support, **Open University** and the omnipresent **Anthony Watkinson**, Consultant, Visiting Professor in Information Science, **City University**.

And finally, the news from **xrefer** on platform One, Paddington Station is that we have now released **xreferplus** (Dec 7th) and are welcoming our first flurry of libraries as subscribers.

We also welcomed the Queen in the station a couple of weeks ago. Quite unexpectedly she arrived in Paddington to take a normal passenger train to Wiltshire. Mind you, she was traveling first class! 